

A SURVEY OF TYPES OF MATERIALS USED IN TEACHING
READING SKILLS IN GRADES ONE THROUGH SIX IN
THE SCHOOLS OF PELLA, IOWA

A Field Report
Presented to
The School of Graduate Studies
Drake University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

by
Judy De Jong
December 1970

1970
D369

A SURVEY OF TYPES OF MATERIALS USED IN TEACHING
READING SKILLS IN GRADES ONE THROUGH SIX IN
THE SCHOOLS OF PELLA, IOWA

by
Judy De Jong

Approved by Committee:

Hazel Weakly
Chairman

R. H. De Jong

Richard De Jong
ASSOCIATE Dean of the School of Graduate Studies

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	1
Importance of the Study	2
Limitations of the Study	3
Definition of Terms	4
Review of Literature	5
Summary	16
II. PRESENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF DATA	18
Procedure	18
Analysis of Data	19
III. CONCLUSION	26
Summary	26
Conclusions	26
Recommendations	30
BIBLIOGRAPHY	32
APPENDIX A. Letter	37
APPENDIX B. Survey Questionnaire	38

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I. Percentage of First Through Sixth Grade Teachers of Pella, Iowa, with a Given Number of Years of Experience and Grade Level Taught	19
II. Percentage of First Through Sixth Grade Teachers of Pella, Iowa, Utilizing Workbooks Correlated with the Basal Series	20
III. Percentage of First Through Sixth Grade Teachers of Pella, Iowa, Utilizing Programmed Materials as Supplementary Work for Some or All Students	21
IV. Percentage of First Through Sixth Grade Teachers of Pella, Iowa, Who Have Available Through Their Schools Various Items of Audio-Visual Equipment	22
V. Percentage of Time First Through Sixth Grade Teachers of Pella, Iowa, Utilize Audio-Visual Equipment for the Reinforcement of Reading Skills	23
VI. Percentage of First Through Sixth Grade Teachers of Pella, Iowa, Who Incorporate Content Areas into the Reading Program	24
VII. Frequency of Visits Made to the Classroom or School Library Calculated by Per Cent of First Through Sixth Grade Teachers of Pella, Iowa, Responding to the Questionnaire	25
VIII. Percentage of Teachers of First Through Sixth Grade in the Schools of Pella, Iowa, Having Available Audio-Visual Equipment as Compared to Per Cent of Teachers Using the Equipment	28

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The methods and materials used in the teaching of reading in elementary schools of today varies greatly. An abundance of materials is available to almost every elementary teacher. A recent survey conducted by the National Educational Association Research Division indicated that a vast majority of today's elementary teachers have motion picture projectors, phonographs, filmstrip projectors, overhead projectors, maps, and charts available as resources.¹

The basal reader has long been the method that maintains priority in the schools. The extent to which the basal readers compile the reading program varies with teachers and school systems. Educators should realize the importance of a more complete offering of materials to the elementary school child who is learning to read.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which elementary teachers actually depend upon basal readers for teaching reading skills. Writings of most

¹National Educational Association Research Bulletin, Instructional Resources in the Classroom, XLV (October, 1967), 75.

authorities in reading indicate that use of a wide and varied amount of material is necessary for a good reading program. This information is available to all elementary teachers via in-service programs, educational course offerings, and personal reading. This study has been initiated to determine if elementary teachers are making use of the findings of those who have conducted research in methods and materials used for teaching reading and reported it in educational literature.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

A survey, according to Clifford L. Bush, is justified in that it (1) provides an inventory of present practices, curriculum, and teaching methods; (2) provides facts to aid in answering critics; (3) aids new teachers in organization and teaching; and (4) identifies problems and organizes facts so that proposals for solutions to problems may be presented.¹

The survey was constructed to determine the practices used in use of aids for teaching reading, provide the writer with facts concerning the question of the extent of teacher use of supplementary materials in teaching reading, aid new teachers through recommendations for teaching and organization

¹Clifford L. Bush, "School Reading Surveys," The Reading Teacher, XV (March, 1962), 352.

of the reading program, and identify the sources of difficulty, if any, in providing a well-balanced reading program for the Pella schools.

The importance of an increasing amount of reading materials other than basal readers in the reading program is consistently cited by authorities such as Gertrude Whipple, who believes that the first step to be taken in the improvement of the reading program in many of today's schools is that of increase in the "amount, quality, and variety of the supply of reading material and other aids to learning."¹

Present American schools have the best and most numerous materials in reading that we have ever had.² Do teachers make use of them? It is imperative that they do!

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is limited in scope in that the survey included only the teachers of grades one through six of the Pella school system. The schools involved are the Pella Christian system, which is housed in one building, and the Pella Public system, which has four buildings: Lincoln, Webster, Leighton, and Otley.

¹Gertrude Whipple, Upgrading Elementary Programs.
Citation Address: Eleventh Annual Reading Convention.
International Reading Association (Newark, Delaware), 1966, p. 2.

²Elizabeth Graf, "Recent Developments in Instructional Materials," Recent Developments in Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 36.

Recommendations will be specifically applicable to the schools of Pella, but generally applicable to all teachers involved in the teaching of reading.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following defined terms will be used throughout this report.

Audio-visual materials. Audio-visual materials may be defined this way:

The term audio-visual material is employed as designation for a wide range of instructional materials and devices that are less symbolic than the printed word____field trips, demonstrations, dramatizations, synthetic devices (contrived experiences), objects, specimens, models and exhibits, silent motion pictures, television, sound motion pictures, sound filmstrips, radio recordings, stereographs, flat pictures, charts, maps, graphs, and diagrams.¹

Basal reader. The basal reader is the structured reading program put out in a series of books by various companies which is geared to be a foundation for systematic instruction in the skills of reading.

Content areas. The content areas are those areas directly related to the reading area (science, social studies,

¹Walter Monroe, Encyclopedia of Educational Research (New York: Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 94.

history, and geography) in that proper skills of reading are needed by the student for success in this area.

Study skills. Those skills of reading which include location of information, effective use of library sources, organization and evaluation of material, and adjustment of the rate of reading to the purpose and the material read are known as study skills.¹

Supplementary readers. The books other than the adopted basal series which are used by children in the reading process are known as the supplementary readers. Basal readers of a series the school has not adopted are often used for supplementary readers.

Trade books. Books that refer to specific areas of occupations in varied manners are referred to as trade books.

Reference books. Reference books are those books such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, and almanacs that are used for gaining specific facts and information.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Much has been written concerning the necessity for a wide and varied amount of materials for the teaching of

¹Arthur W. Heilman, Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1967), p. 392.

reading. The following is actually but a brief summary of some of the writings concerning this area.

The reader may feel that the material presented here is somewhat repetitious, but the writer asks that the purpose of the study be kept in mind. This review of literature is to illustrate that a great deal of information concerning the nature of reading materials is available to all elementary teachers, and that numerous authorities agree on the use of these materials.

Hubert J. Davis felt that the school limits the effectiveness of instruction in reading if experiences which develop meanings of the printed page are neglected. Direct experiences, radio, television, fieldtrips, movies, pictures, magazines, newspapers, and pamphlets are essential in developing the meanings to be derived from reading. According to Davis, "Printed materials and audio-visual materials are complementary, not competitive."¹ Veatch categorized the necessary variety of materials into the tangible and intangible materials. Intangible materials to be used in the teaching of reading included childrens' thoughts, beliefs, oral expression, and reaction to others' oral expressions. Teacher directions to children and their invitations to share ideas also were considered as influential intangible materials.

¹Hubert J. Davis, "Teaching Reading the A-V Way," Educational Screen, XXXI (December, 1952), 417.

The tangible materials were considered to be those which recorded intangibles through written language, mechanical devices, and spontaneous art work. The mechanical devices and printed materials included the various audio-visual aids.¹

Arthur S. Trace, noted critic of the basal reading program, stated this in his book, Reading Without Dick and Jane:

A recent report by James A. Conant entitled, "Learning to Read," which was signed by almost every influential Dick-and-Jane type reading expert in the country tells us this:

The fact must be kept in mind that reading instruction and reading experience in the primary grades in American schools should not be limited to the pages of the basal readers and are not in good schools. Primary grade children read other books, including literature, social studies, arithmetic, science, and health, with the consequence that their reading vocabulary and language experience are far greater than provided in the basal readers.

Furthermore, the children are at the same time reading supplementary books from the school libraries that are rich in words and complex in structure.²

Several research studies have been conducted that indicate that materials are available for most teachers if they want them. A report made by National Educational Association Researchers found that elementary teachers had

¹Jeannette Veatch, "The Materials and Diagnosis of Reading Problems," The Reading Teacher, XIV (September, 1960), 19-25.

²Arthur S. Trace, Jr., Reading Without Dick and Jane (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1965), p. 43.

many and varied resources available. Nearly ninety-six per cent of the teachers had phonographs, ninety-three per cent had filmstrip projectors, eighty-eight per cent had charts and maps, eighty per cent had motion picture projectors, seventy-nine per cent had overhead projectors, seventy-six per cent had tape recorders, sixty-eight per cent had opaque projectors, forty-nine per cent utilized educational TV, and thirty-six per cent had programmed instructional materials available to them.¹

A study conducted by Norman Frame and involving thirty schools ranging in student population from ninety-two to nine hundred and forty-three students, revealed that (1) the number of trade books per classroom met or exceeded the figures suggested by reading authorities; (2) most schools provided some filmstrips for use in teaching reading; (3) more than twenty-five per cent of the interviewed teachers scheduled a library period for their students, and most teachers allowed their children to read when assigned seat work had been completed; and (4) all of the teachers interviewed were utilizing workbooks and requiring all pupils of the grade to complete each workbook.²

¹National Educational Association Research Bulletin, op. cit., p. 16.

²Norman Frame, "The Availability of Reading Materials for Teachers and Pupils at the Primary Level," Elementary English, XLI (March, 1964), 227-228.

Fitzgerald and Fitzgerald reiterated the importance of a varied approach when they stated that

The basal books are generally supplemented by trade books, library books, current literature, and reference materials. An important objective for children in the early stages of rapid progress is reading widely for enjoyment and information. Readers and supplementary sources should supply appealing literature and other selections.¹

When evaluating materials necessary for a good program of reading, Fitzgerald and Fitzgerald included in their list of valuable materials the basal readers, workbooks, teachers' guides, supplementary readers, trade books, story books, dictionaries, reference books, word cards, "flash cards, filmstrips, and children's newspapers and magazines."²

Bush added to the list of necessary items for the well-equipped classroom, programmed materials, teacher-made materials, multi-level kits of reading and study aids, films, and maps.³ Dechant added items such as collections of poems, fairy tales, riddles, rhymes, games, magazines, booklists, and catalogs of books for teachers. He indicated also the necessity for various mechanical devices such as the

¹James A. Fitzgerald and Patricia G. Fitzgerald, Teaching Reading and the Language Arts (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1965), p. 163.

²James A. Fitzgerald and Patricia G. Fitzgerald, Fundamentals of Reading Instruction (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1967), p. 95.

³Clifford L. Bush and Mildred H. Huebner, Strategies for Reading in the Elementary School (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), p. 247.

tachistoscope, controlled reader, and other directional and accelerating devices.¹ Bond advocated that experience charts, child prepared books and materials, and context subject texts should be included in the list of materials necessary for a proper reading instructional program.²

One of the most desired outcomes of the reading program is that the child is able to read widely and read for many purposes. The school which produces children who do not apply reading skills to gain clear understandings and to perceive relationships historically and socially, and do not gain a permanent interest in reading should more closely inspect its reading objectives.³

Reading is founded upon both incidental and planned experiences. Therefore it is related to various other language arts and cannot be taught as a separate entity. Integration of the various skills in the language arts area is essential and must be constant. Reading instruction must include listening, oral communication, spelling, writing, and vocabulary enrichment.⁴

¹Emerald V. Dechant, Improving the Teaching of Reading (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), pp. 404; 450-456.

²Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond Wagner, Teaching the Child to Read (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), pp. 100-115.

³Donald C. Cushenbery, Reading Improvement in the Elementary School (West Nyack, New York: Parker Publishing Company, Inc., 1969), pp. 3-6.

⁴Fitzgerald and Fitzgerald, op. cit., p. 5.

Cushenbery stated several principles for effective reading instruction which inferred that effective teaching must center around the individual needs of the pupil, and that therefore a wide variety of approaches is necessary in order to properly deal with all children.¹

Heilman summarized it in this way:

Any given technique, practice, or procedure is likely to work better with some children than with others. Hence, the teacher of reading must have a variety of approaches.²

Guy Bond concluded from an overview of first grade reading studies that no one method could be so outstanding that it merited usage of that approach and excluded others, but that the actual effectiveness of any worthy approach is heightened and broadened when other instructionals are added.³

De Boer and Dallmann have stated that "visual aids are a very effective means of awakening the child's desire to read."⁴

Whipple in an address at a reading convention made this statement:

¹Cushenbery, op. cit., p. 3.

²Heilman, op. cit., p. 9.

³Guy L. Bond, "First Grade Reading Studies: An Overview," Elementary English, XLIII (May, 1966), 470.

⁴John J. De Boer and Martha Dallmann, The Teaching of Reading (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1964), p. 274.

The resources at the teacher's disposal should provide a systematic and enriched program, meet the individual differences of children, and furnish enough books and selections on a given theme to relate the reading and studies under way to centers of interest for the group and the individual child. Without enough appropriate materials and equipment, adequate instruction cannot be given either in reading as such or in the entire school program.

Teachers should be provided with every helpful aid to learning and should make use of these resources effectively. Today there are new media of reading instruction as well as the older media of printed instructional materials.¹

The basal reader itself has been the subject of much praise and much criticism. Heilman recognized the value of basal instruction when he argued that although the basal series provide the foundations for systematic skill instruction, they may be considered dull and repetitive, their use of language is removed from that of the child, the stories lack literary value, and the content is geared to the middle class strata.²

Chall stated that research conducted revealed that authors of the basal series saw that their readers were designed for teaching basic skills and could not possibly meet all the child's reading needs.³

¹Whipple, op. cit., p. 2.

²Heilman, op. cit., p. 108.

³Jeanne S. Chall, Learning to Read: The Great Debate (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), p. 191.

Ford and Koplyay investigated the story preferences of young children and found that stories in primers and preprimers provided striking differences between what the children get and what they actually want in story content. The children indicated that they did not like the character and environmental settings.¹

Spache and Spache advocated that the basal reader has been criticized for failing to provide a proper foundation for the reading skills necessary for the content areas. Training in map and library skills and proper use of references is hardly touched upon in most basal programs.²

Trace centered his criticism upon vocabulary. He stated that the typical sixth grade basal reader vocabulary was less than half of the speaking and understanding vocabulary of the typical kindergartener.³ Gates conducted a study of the control and meaning of "new" words in basal reading material and concluded that average ability third graders appeared to have no more difficulty with so called "new" words in basal reading material for fourth grade than with words that they had previously encountered in basal

¹Robin C. Ford and James Koplyay, "Children's Story Preferences," The Reading Teacher, XXII (December, 1968), 237.

²George D. Spache and Evelyn B. Spache, Reading in the Elementary School (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1969), p. 97.

³Trace, op. cit., p. 39-40.

instruction. Therefore, listening to a conventional explanation of the new words in the basal lesson is seemingly meaningless and time-consuming.¹

Many teachers and administrators interviewed by Austin and Morrison criticized the basal reader for its lack of literary quality. Some felt that the basal reader content was not challenging and did not have sufficient relation to childrens' lives.²

Stewart told us this:

We must remember: the basal reader is merely a tool. The values and limitations ascribed to the basal reader really constitute a commentary on schools and teachers. The way in which we use what we have will continue to determine our effectiveness as educators.³

The workbook has been a greatly misused item in the reading program. Clarence R. Stone has stated that the practice of providing workbooks merely to accompany reading books "without providing intrinsic vocabulary preparation for each selection is unfortunate."⁴

¹Arthur I. Gates, "Vocabulary Control in Basal Reading Material," The Reading Teacher, XV (November, 1961), 85.

²Mary C. Austin and Coleman Morrison, The First R: The Harvard Report on Reading in Elementary Schools (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1963), p. 55.

³David K. Stewart, "Materials for the Reading Program," Readings on Reading Instruction (Albert J. Harris, ed.) (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1963), p. 363.

⁴Clarence R. Stone, "Questionable Trends in Beginning Reading," Elementary School Journal, LXVI (January, 1966), 215.

The adoption of workbooks within a school is directly proportionate to the number of basal series used. The school which adopts a single basic series is much more apt to utilize the accompanying workbook than the school which uses two or three reading series.¹

Heilman challenged the effectiveness of workbooks by stating that although workbooks are established to teach pupils functions of the index, table of contents, and appendix, it is not uncommon to find that the student who can correctly complete the workbook cannot get help from a real index.²

Workbooks should not "just happen" to be chosen for use by children.

A good reading program should mean careful selection of guide books, readers, and workbooks to insure the development of basic skills and abilities so that our boys and girls may continue to thrill to the printed page.³

Middle grade children interviewed by Thomas Fleck felt that workbooks were irrelevant, made reading boring, and didn't teach anything.⁴

¹Ralph G. Staiger, "How Are Basal Readers Used?" Elementary English, LXVI (January, 1966), 215.

²Heilman, op. cit., p. 374.

³Martha Thompson, "The Purposes of Workbooks and Teachers' Guides," Readings on Reading Instruction, op. cit., p. 368.

⁴Thomas Fleck, "Middle Graders Talk About Reading," What is Reading Doing to the Child?, eds. Nancy Larrick and John A. Stoops (Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1967), p. 75.

Preparation of children reading in the content areas is sadly neglected in the lower grades.

Sometime during the course of transmission of opinions, beliefs, and customs from one generation of teachers to another, a legend evolved that reading should be taught during special periods set aside for the express purpose of giving the child control over the skills of reading. Likewise, legend has dictated that arithmetic, science, geography, and history should be taught at specific times in the daily program for the purpose of developing distinctive skills and imparting characteristic knowledge in each of these fields, usually with little or no consideration for the development of reading skills as one aspect of this specialized instruction.

Reading proficiency could be improved immeasurably if more attention were given to the development of study skills in the primary and intermediate grades. Perhaps this is one way of reducing reading casualties in high school and college, where knowing how to study¹ is the most important category of all reading skills.

The teaching of reading in the content areas demands a great deal more than just reading facts and figures. The basic reading skills of comprehension of history, geography, and other social studies should be an integral part of the teaching of reading skills.²

SUMMARY

Authorities in the reading field have written much concerning the materials necessary for the teaching of

¹Nila Banton Smith, "Teaching Study Skills in Reading," Elementary School Journal, LX (December, 1959), 162.

²Mildred A. Dawson and Henry A. Banman, Fundamentals of Basic Reading Instruction (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, Inc., 1959), p. 198.

reading. Basically, each one advocated usage of varied materials for the individuals within the classroom. The practice of using the basal reading series and accompanying workbooks without proper supplementation is inexcusable for today's teachers.

Snider has summed it up in this way:

Reading is the process of interpreting completely abstract marks that represent people, things, and ideas we may never have seen or experienced. It would seem logical, then, that less abstract devices, particularly audio-visual materials dealing with reading content, would be indispensable for the teaching and improvement of reading.¹

¹Helen M. Robinson (ed.), Materials for Reading (Proceedings of the Annual Conference on Reading, Vol. XIX; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 48.

CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF DATA

PROCEDURE

Within this chapter, the investigator will report the data which were accumulated throughout the study. The survey of types of materials used in teaching reading skills in grades one through six in the schools of Pella, Iowa, was conducted by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was constructed with reference to the advocacy of the use of various types of materials for the teaching of reading. The validation of the questionnaire was completed by four members of the Drake University summer class, Social Psychology of Education, all of whom were elementary teachers.

The results of the survey are based upon information obtained from the questionnaire submitted to elementary teachers. The questionnaire appears in the appendix.¹ Many of the results of the questionnaire are presented in table form. All tables are calculated in per cent of responses.

Copies of the questionnaire were presented to the principals of the Pella Christian School and the Pella Community Schools on September 11, 1970, with the request that each teacher of the grades one through six was to

¹Appendix B.

receive a copy. The letter accompanying each questionnaire asked that the completed questionnaire be returned by October 1, 1970.¹ Forty questionnaires were distributed. Thirty-five completed questionnaires were returned by October 1, making an eighty-five per cent response.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The response to the first and second questions of the questionnaire indicated that approximately fifty per cent of those responding had eleven or more years of experience, eleven per cent had six to ten years, nine per cent had three to five years, and twenty-six per cent had two or less years of experience. Table I shows the distribution of the years of experience and corresponding grade level of those responding.

TABLE I

PERCENTAGE OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS OF PELLA, IOWA, WITH A GIVEN NUMBER OF YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND GRADE LEVEL TAUGHT

Number of years of experience	Grade level taught					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
11 or more years	11.42	2.85**	8.57	14.28*	11.42	0
6-10 years	5.71	0	0	0	2.85	2.85
3-5 years	0	5.71	0	0	2.85	2.85
0-2 years	0	5.71	11.42	5.71	2.85	0

**2.85 per cent had a combination second and third grade.

*2.85 per cent had a combination fourth and fifth grade.

¹Appendix B.

The third question concerned the use of basal readers. One hundred per cent of those responding utilized the basal reader for teaching reading. Seventy-one per cent indicated that they used a co-basal series. Twenty per cent did not use more than one basal series. The remaining nine per cent failed to respond to the question concerning co-basal readers. None of those who responded that they used only one basal was a teacher of first grade. The majority of those using only one basal were teachers of grades four, five, and six.

Sixty-nine per cent of the teachers responding did not use the same basal program for every child. Twenty-six per cent used the same for each child.

The responses to the questions concerning the use of workbooks are illustrated in Table II.

TABLE II
PERCENTAGE OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS OF
PELLA, IOWA, UTILIZING WORKBOOKS CORRELATED
WITH THE BASAL SERIES

	Yes	No	No Response
Used workbooks correlated with basal	88.57	5.71	5.71
Required all children to complete workbook for each basal level	57.14	37.14	5.71

The use of basal materials for the teaching of reading varied. One hundred per cent used a basal series. Fifty-seven per cent used programmed materials also. Table III shows the manner in which the programmed materials were used and supplemented by those who used them.

TABLE III

PERCENTAGE OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS OF
PELLA, IOWA, UTILIZING PROGRAMMED MATERIALS AS
SUPPLEMENTARY WORK FOR SOME OR ALL STUDENTS

	Yes	No
Used programmed materials for all students	80.00	20.00
Supplemented programmed materials with other instructional materials	85.00	15.00

Most of those who supplemented the programmed material indicated that they did so with library sources and/or the basal reader. One teacher stated that he used texts other than the basal, but gave no further explanation as to the kind of texts used.

Several questions dealt with the categories concerning the audio-visual equipment available within the school and the actual use that was made of that material. Table IV illustrated the equipment which the schools possess and have available for teacher usage.

TABLE IV

PERCENTAGE OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS OF PELLA,
IOWA, WHO HAVE AVAILABLE THROUGH THEIR SCHOOLS
VARIOUS ITEMS OF AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT

Item of Equipment	Per cent of teachers having item available
Overhead Projector	100.00
Filmstrip Projector	97.14
Motion Picture Projector	94.28
Phonograph	97.14
Dictionaries for each child	85.71
Word Cards	68.57
Reading Games	57.14
Tachistoscopes	11.42
Controlled Readers	40.00
Pocket Charts	40.00

Many of the teachers indicated that they did not utilize the equipment often for the teaching of reading. The actual teacher usage of the audio-visual materials is presented in Table V.

TABLE V

PERCENTAGE OF TIME FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS OF
PELLA, IOWA, UTILIZE AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT FOR THE
REINFORCEMENT OF READING SKILLS

Item of Equipment	Frequency Utilized			
	More than weekly	Weekly	Monthly	Not at all
Overhead	31.42	17.14	22.85	28.57
Filmstrips	2.85	8.57	34.28	54.28
Films	11.42	20.00	42.85	25.71
Records	2.85	8.57	37.14	51.42
Tape Recorder	2.85	5.71	28.57	62.85
Controlled Readers	17.14	5.71	5.71	71.42
Tachistoscope	0.00	2.85	5.71	91.42
Reading Games	8.57	28.57	14.28	48.57
Word Cards	31.42	8.57	2.85	57.14
Library Books	80.00	14.28	2.85	2.85

The responses to the question concerning the incorporation of study skills into the reading program indicated that basically, teachers of Pella feel that they are incorporating into their reading program the study skills of locating information, use of references, evaluation of reading material, and adjustment of reading rate to the purpose for reading.

The question which dealt with the amount of content reading that teachers felt they included in their reading skills elicited the responses recorded in Table VI.

TABLE VI
PERCENTAGE OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS WHO
INCORPORATE CONTENT AREAS INTO THEIR
READING PROGRAM

Content area taught	Percentage teaching the area
Skimming	48.57
Map Reading	62.85
Comprehension	85.71
Outlining	42.85
Reading for Details	80.00

Eighty per cent of the teachers who were polled stated that they had a classroom library. The number of volumes in the classroom libraries varied from twelve to four hundred.

Table VII exhibits the response of teachers to the question concerning the frequency that children may visit the library to choose a book.

TABLE VII

FREQUENCY OF VISITS MADE TO THE CLASSROOM OR SCHOOL LIBRARY
CALCULATED BY PER CENT OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE
TEACHERS OF PELLA, IOWA, RESPONDING
TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Frequency of visits	Per cent visiting at that frequency
Daily	22.85
Twice-three times weekly	24.28
Weekly	41.42
Less than weekly	11.42

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

SUMMARY

It was the purpose of this study to determine the extent to which elementary teachers depend upon the basal reader for the teaching of reading skills. Related literature was discussed in Chapter I. Authorities cited in the review indicated the necessity for a wide variety of materials in the teaching of reading.

The study was conducted by means of a questionnaire. The study was limited to the five elementary schools of the Pella, Iowa, school district. The questionnaire was distributed to the teachers, collected, and results compiled in the fall of 1970. Tabulations of the results were reported in Tables I through VII in Chapter II of this study.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings reported in Chapter II elicit the following varied conclusions:

The response to the first question indicated that the majority of the teachers of grades one through six in the Pella schools had eleven or more years of experience.¹

¹Table I, p. 19.

Staiger, as reported in Chapter I, has stated that the adoption of workbooks within a school is in direct proportion to the number of basal series used: the greater the number of series used, the less possibility for the use of workbooks.¹

This, however, does not seem to be true of the Pella schools. Despite the fact that seventy per cent of those who responded reported that they used a co-basal series, eighty-nine per cent reported that they used the workbooks correlated with the basal, and fifty-seven per cent reported that each child was required to complete the workbooks for each basal level.²

Although the schools seemed to rely heavily upon the basal readers for their instructional program, other materials were available and utilized. Fifty-seven per cent used some sort of programmed materials along with the basal. Of the fifty-seven per cent, eighty per cent used the programmed material for all students.³

Despite the fact that the schools had much equipment available for teacher usage, a high percentage of teachers used the audio-visual equipment very little if at all.

¹Staiger, op. cit., p. 215.

²Table II, p. 20.

³Table III, p. 21.

Table VIII indicated the availability of materials to teachers as compared to the amount of actual use.

TABLE VIII

PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE IN THE SCHOOLS OF PELLA, IOWA, HAVING AVAILABLE AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT AS COMPARED TO PER CENT OF TEACHERS USING THE EQUIPMENT IN THE READING PROGRAM

Equipment	Per cent having equipment available	Per cent using equipment
Overhead Projector	100.00	48.56
Filmstrip Projector	97.14*	11.42
Film Projector	94.28	31.42
Phonograph	97.14	11.42
Controlled Readers	40.00	22.85
Tachistoscopes	11.42	2.85
Games	57.14	37.14
Word Cards	68.57	39.99

*Many filmstrips are available through the county office. The Christian school also has access to the filmstrip libraries of the neighboring Christian schools.

The teachers who responded to the questionnaire indicated almost unanimously (94.28 per cent) that they utilized library books to supplement their reading programs. The response revealed, however, that library books were not easily accessible to the children.¹ Although eighty per cent

¹Table VII, p. 25.

of the teachers stated that they had a classroom library, nearly fifty-three per cent of the teachers allowed their children to visit the library only once per week or less.

Whipple has stated that teachers should be provided with the necessary helpful aids to learning, but they should also effectively use these resources.¹ Pella's teachers have reported that although resources are provided, not all teachers are making use of them.

Stewart stated this concerning the basal reader:

We must remember: the basal reader is merely a tool. The values and limitations ascribed to the basal reader really constitute a commentary on schools and teachers.²

Pella's teachers value the basal reader to assist them in the teaching of reading skills, but have shown a recognition of the importance of co-basal, supplementary materials, and programmed materials in the reading program.

Reading must be taught in a variety of ways and includes a variety of skills. Basal readers have been criticized for failure to provide proper foundations for reading skills in the content areas. Training in map skills is rarely touched upon.³ Smith has said:

¹Whipple, op. cit., p. 2.

²Stewart, op. cit., p. 363.

³Spache and Spache, op. cit., p. 97.

Reading proficiency could be improved immeasurably if more attention were given to the development of study skills in the primary and intermediate grades.¹

Those who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they are including study skills within their reading program already at the primary grade level.²

Teachers of today must be aware that no one method or material of reading is so outstanding that it can either preclude others or be used for every child in the same manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study stimulated possibilities for further investigation.

The response of the Pella teachers indicated that fifty per cent of the teachers had eleven or more years of experience. A study could be made of the similarity or difference in the method of teaching of reading by those who have taught more than ten years as compared to those who have taught less than five consecutive years.

Another topic for further study could be the understanding that teachers have concerning the process of reading. Smith has said:

¹Smith, op. cit., p. 162.

²Table VI, p. 24.

Sometime during the course of transmission of opinions, beliefs, and customs from one generation of teacher to another, a legend evolved that reading should be taught during special periods set aside for the express purpose of giving the child control over the skills of reading.¹

It would be interesting to note how much teachers feel they incorporate reading skills into every aspect of their teaching program as contrasted to depending upon the "reading period" to teach all reading skills.

¹Smith, op. cit., p. 162.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Books

- Austin, Mary C., and Coleman Morrison. The First R: The Harvard Report on Reading in Elementary Schools. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1963.
- Bond, Guy L., and Eva Bond Wagner. Teaching the Child to Read. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1966.
- Bush, Clifford L., and Mildred H. Huebner. Strategies for Reading in the Elementary School. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1970.
- Chall, Jeanne S. Learning to Read: The Great Debate. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967.
- Cushenbery, Donald C. Reading Improvement in the Elementary School. West Nyack, New York: Parker Publishing Co., Inc., 1969.
- Dawson, Mildred A., and Henry A. Bomman. Fundamentals of Basic Reading Instruction. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., Inc., 1959.
- De Boer, John J., and Martha Dallmann. The Teaching of Reading. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1964.
- Dechant, Emerald V. Improving the Teaching of Reading. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964.
- Fitzgerald, James A., and Patricia G. Fitzgerald. Fundamentals of Reading Instruction. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1967.
- _____. Teaching Reading and the Language Arts. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1965.
- Fleck, Thomas. "Middle Graders Talk About Reading," What is Reading Doing to the Child? Edited by Nancy Larrick and John A. Stoops. Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1967.
- Heilman, Arthur W. Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1967.

- Monroe, Walter. Encyclopedia of Educational Research. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950.
- Spache, George D., and Evelyn B. Spache. Reading in the Elementary School. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1969.
- Stewart, David K. "Materials for the Reading Program," Readings on Reading Instruction. Edited by Albert J. Harris. New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1963.
- Thompson, Martha. "The Purpose of Workbooks and Teachers' Guides," Readings on Reading Instruction. Edited by Albert J. Harris. New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1963.
- Trace, Arthur S., Jr. Reading Without Dick and Jane. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1965.

2. Periodicals

- Betts, Emmert Albert. "How Well Are We Teaching Reading?," Elementary English, XXXVIII (October, 1961), 377-381.
- Bond, Guy L. "First Grade Reading Studies: An Overview," Elementary English, XLIII (May, 1966), 464-470.
- Bush, Clifford L. "School Reading Surveys," The Reading Teacher, XV (March, 1962), 351-355.
- Davis, Hubert J. "Teaching Reading the A-V Way," Educational Screen, XXXI (December, 1952), 417-419, 434.
- Ford, Robin C., and James Koplyay. "Children's Story Preferences," The Reading Teacher, XXII (December, 1968), 233-237.
- Frame, Norman. "The Availability of Reading Materials for Teachers and Pupils at the Primary Level," Elementary English, XLI (March, 1964), 224-229.
- Gates, Arthur I. "Vocabulary Control in Basal Reading Materials," The Reading Teacher, XV (November, 1961), 81-85.
- Leestma, Robert. "The Film Reader Program," Elementary English, XXXIII (February, 1956), 97-101.
- Smith, Nila Banton. "Teaching Study Skills in Reading," Elementary School Journal, XL (December, 1959), 158-162.

Staiger, Ralph C. "How Are Basal Readers Used?", Elementary English, XXXV (January, 1958), 46-49.

Stone, Clarence R. "Questionable Trends in Beginning Reading," Elementary School Journal, LXVI (January, 1966), 214-222.

Veatch, Jeannette. "The Materials and Diagnosis of Reading Problems," The Reading Teacher, XIV (September, 1960), 19-25.

3. Publications of the Government, Learned Societies, and Other Organizations

Graf, Elizabeth. "Recent Developments in Instructional Materials," Recent Developments in Reading. Proceedings of the Annual Conference of Reading. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965. pp. 29-36.

National Educational Association Research Bulletin. Instructional Resources in the Classroom, XLV (October, 1967), 75-77.

Robinson, Helen M. (ed.). Materials for Reading. Proceedings of the Annual Conference on Reading. Vol. XIX. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.

Whipple, Gertrude. Upgrading Elementary Programs. Citation Address: Eleventh Annual Convention, International Reading Association. Newark, Delaware: 1966.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Peoria Christian School
Pella, Iowa
September 11, 1970

Dear Fellow Educator,

I would like to ask you to take a few moments to respond to the attached questionnaire. The questionnaire is a vital part of my field report which is to be submitted to Drake University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science in Education degree. The field report is a study concerning materials used in teaching reading.

Your responses will be anonymous and at no time will you be identified in any way. If you wish information on the results of the questionnaires, please send me your name and address, and I will be happy to comply with your request.

Would you please return the questionnaire to me in the attached addressed, stamped envelope by October 1, 1970? I am very grateful for your assistance!

Sincerely,

Miss Judy De Jong

APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE MATERIALS USED FOR THE TEACHING OF READING

(Please check the response that best describes your situation)

1. What grade level do you teach?

1_____ 2_____ 3_____ 4_____ 5_____ 6_____

2. How long have you taught?

0-2 years_____ 3-5 years_____ 6-10 years_____

11 or more_____

3. Do you use a basal reader?

yes_____ no_____

If yes, do you have a co-basal?

yes_____ no_____

4. Do you use the workbook correlated with your basal?

yes_____ no_____

5. Do all children complete the workbook for each basal level?

yes_____ no_____

6. Do you use the same basal program for all children?

yes_____ no_____

7. Which of the following materials does your school have?

overhead projector_____

pocket charts_____

filmstrip projector_____

word cards_____

motion picture projector_____

reading games_____

phonograph_____

tachistoscopes_____

dictionaries for each child_____

controlled readers_____

8. Approximately how often do you use the following materials in teaching reading?

	more than once per week	weekly	monthly	not at all
overhead	_____	_____	_____	_____
filmstrips	_____	_____	_____	_____
films	_____	_____	_____	_____
records	_____	_____	_____	_____
tape recorder	_____	_____	_____	_____
controlled reader	_____	_____	_____	_____
tachistoscopes	_____	_____	_____	_____
reading games	_____	_____	_____	_____
word cards	_____	_____	_____	_____
library books	_____	_____	_____	_____

9. Do you use programmed materials?

yes_____ no_____

If yes, do you use them for all children?

yes_____ no_____

Do you supplement the programmed materials?

yes_____ no_____

If yes, with what do you supplement them?

library sources_____ basal readers_____ other (please
indicate)_____

10. Which of these study skills do you incorporate into your reading program?

locating information_____

use of references_____

evaluation of reading materials_____

adjusting rate to purpose_____

11. Do you give special instruction in content reading?

yes_____ no_____

If yes, in which areas?

skimming_____

outlining_____

map reading_____

reading for details_____

comprehension_____

12. Do you have a classroom library?

yes_____ no_____

If yes, approximately how many books does it contain?_____

13. Do children visit the library

on a preset schedule_____

or whenever they desire to choose a book?_____

14. How often do your children visit the library?

daily_____

2-3 times weekly_____

weekly_____

less than weekly_____